

# LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Accessing and using  
data from the  
UK Commission's  
Employer Perspectives  
Survey 2014



IFF Research



UK COMMISSION FOR  
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

## CONTENTS

- **What is the UK Commission’s Employer Perspectives Survey?** 1
- **Navigating the questionnaire and data tables** 2
- **Outputs from the Employer Perspectives Survey** 3
- **Main UK report** 4
- **Slide packs** 4
- **Main data outputs** 6
- **Using the main UK and nation tables** 6
  - How to use the tables 7
  - Structure of the main data tables 8
  - Significance testing on the main UK and nation tables 10
- **Using the LEP key findings data tables** 12
  - How to use the tables 12
  - Significance testing on the LEP key findings tables 13
- **Notes on the importance of base sizes and statistical significance** 14

## What is the UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey?

The UK Commission's **Employer Perspective Survey (EPS)** provides a UK-wide picture of how employers are meeting their skills and recruitment needs, looking both at their engagement with skills and employment services and their broader approaches to people development.

EPS is a biennial survey of employers; this is the third iteration of EPS, which was also carried out in 2010 and 2012. EPS is the successor to the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)'s Employer Survey, carried out in 2002, 2005 and 2008. The topics covered in the 2014 survey include: approaches to recruitment; awareness and use of skills support services/initiatives; training and engagement with external training providers; use of vocational qualifications and apprenticeships; use of work placements; collaboration with schools, colleges, universities and other employers; the recruitment of young people; and perceptions on the work preparedness of education leavers.

### Providing an all-round picture of the skills experiences of employers

The focus of EPS is very much external, considering how different employers' engagements with skills and employment services shape the establishments' skills and recruitment needs. The UK Commission's biennial **Employer Skills Survey (ESS)** complements the findings of EPS by being more internally focused. In particular, ESS looks at training and staff development, vacancies that are unfilled because of skills shortages, gaps in employees' skills and a host of other measures to provide a comprehensive picture of skills needs and training investment in UK businesses. Together, the two surveys provide a robust, all-round picture of the skills needs and experiences of employers across the UK.

## Navigating the questionnaire and data tables

The questionnaire used for EPS 2014 is structured around 4 main sections (A, C, D and E) though sections C and D comprise a number of sub-sections. The order and naming conventions used for the table titles is consistent with the questionnaire in order to assist with navigating the various data outputs. The sections of the questionnaire are detailed below.

### (A) Firmographics

- A short section capturing information about the establishment and (if applicable) its wider organisation (number of employees, whether private or public sector, industrial sector).
- This section also captures perceptions on business outlook over the next 12 months

### (C) Recruitment and Work Experience

- Covering whether recruited in last 12 months, channels used to fill vacancies, and the awareness and use of recruitment related government initiatives.
- The factors looked for in candidates.
- Recruitment of young people and education leavers and perceptions on their preparedness for work.
- Whether employers offer a variety of work placements and internships and/or work inspiration activities.
- Engagement with educational institutions for providing work-related experiences to students.

### (D) People Development

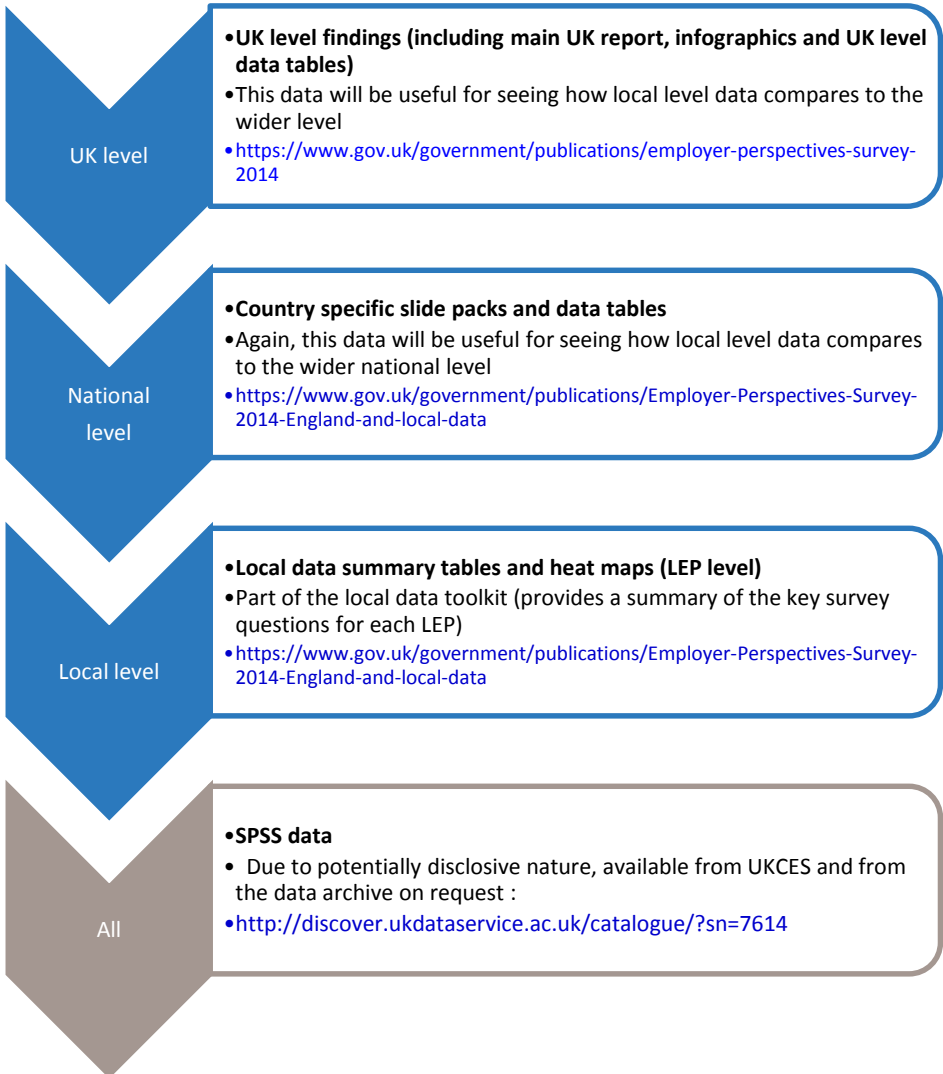
- Sources of information and advice used for staff development.
- Employer collaboration on skills and training.
- Provision of training and use of training providers over the past 12 months.
- Use and perceptions of vocational qualifications.
- Awareness and use of National Occupational Standards.
- Use of Apprenticeships (including details about the quality of Apprenticeships offered).

### (E) Awareness and Perceptions of IIP

- A short section exploring employers' awareness and use of Investors in People.

## Outputs from the Employer Perspectives Survey

There are various data outputs from EPS available which can be used for a variety of purposes. As detailed below, data is available from the UK level right down to findings specific to LEPs in England.



The following sections of the guidebook will explain each output in turn.

## Main UK report

The main UK report presents the key findings from EPS and provides a comprehensive overview of how employers across the UK meet their skills and recruitment needs, pulling out key significant differences by nation, sector and size of establishment.

This report was published in November 2014 and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-perspectives-survey-2014>

## Slide packs

The slide packs from EPS summarise key findings at the country level. The slide packs are presented as chapters covering:

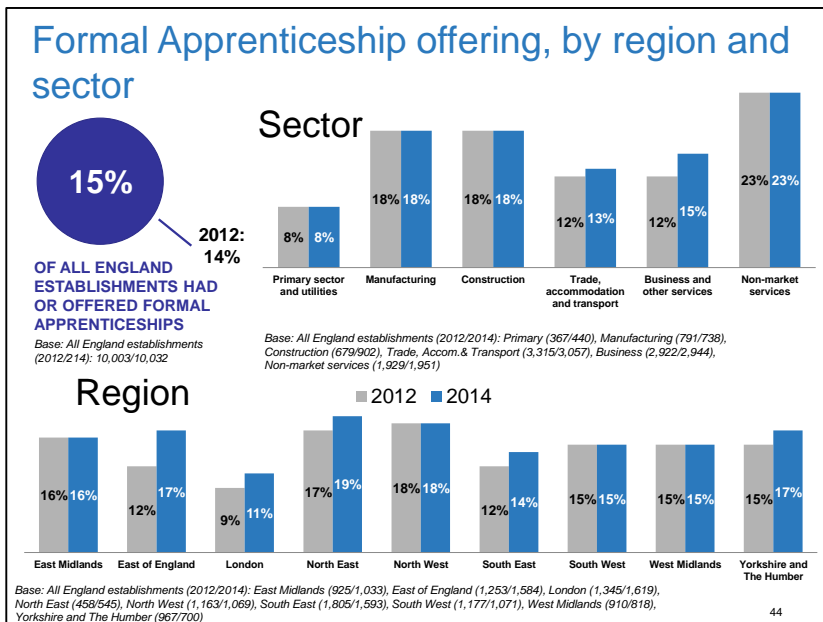
1. **Recruitment** (including: whether recruited at all and, if so, the recruitment channels used; whether recruited a young person; whether recruited an education leaver; and perceived preparedness of education leavers)
2. **Work experience** (including: whether offer any form of work placement; the typical characteristics of work placements offered; whether offer work inspiration activities and reasons for not doing so)
3. **People development** (including: the types of training offered and who employers use to source the training; how employers fund their training; take up of vocational qualifications; extent of collaboration with other employers in

relation to skills and training practices; and awareness of NOS and IIP).

4. **Apprenticeships** (including: an overview of Apprenticeships offered; whether Apprenticeships are offered to new or existing employees; the typical length of an Apprenticeship; and future plans for offering Apprenticeships).

As per the example below, the data allows for the identification of broad regional differences in the nation slide packs.

*Example from the England slide pack:*



## Main data outputs

Accompanying the main report and slide packs are a number of different sets of data tables allowing users to explore the headline findings from EPS and help users to identify the differences between different types of employers. These other main data outputs are:

- **UK data tables**

The main UK data tables present the data used in the main EPS UK report. These data tables allow for comprehensive sub-group analysis of every question asked in the survey.

- **National level data tables**

A set of data tables have been produced for each of the UK nations which includes regional breakdowns specific to each nation, in addition to the full set of data cross-breaks.

- **LEP key findings tables**

A set of data tables which provides a summary of key findings for each LEP.

Detailed below are some notes to, firstly, assist users in understanding the structure of the main UK and nation data outputs and, secondly, the LEP key findings tables.

## Using the main UK and nation tables

### Overview of the data available

The main UK and nation-level data tables present data for each question asked in EPS along with a number of analysis breaks allowing users to cut the data depending on various employer



characteristics (such as size and sector) as well as regional breakdowns. As an example, using the England nation tables allows us to see that 19% of employers in the North East region offered Apprenticeships compared with the England average of 15%.

## How to use the tables

The data tables come in Microsoft Excel format with separate worksheets used to present data for each question asked in EPS.

The 'total' column on the tables presents the overall findings for the UK (if using the UK tables) and the specific country (if using the nation tables). In the example screenshot below, we can see that 34% of all establishments in the East of England region had taken anyone on to first job on leaving school, college or university in the last 2-3 years, compared with 31% of all employers in England.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following content:

UK Commission for Employment Enquiries Survey (UKCEPS) 2014 - England

Table 27/ 1

C10Ai. Whether taken anyone on to first job on leaving school, college or university

Base: All establishments

	Total	England East Midlands	England East of England	England London
Significance Level: 95%		a	b	c
Unweighted base	10032	1033	1584	1619
Weighted base	1488170	120461	169817	260283
Yes	467288 31%	38793 32%	57489 34%	92710 36%
No	984602 66%	78250 65%	109348 64%	157791 61%
Don't know	36279 2%	3418 3%	2980 2%	9782 4%

Research conducted by IFF Research

Callouts in the image point to:
 

- Base description:** Points to the 'Base: All establishments' text.
- Data for England overall:** Points to the 'Total' column.
- Data for East of England region:** Points to the 'England East of England' column.

It should also be noted that on every data table has a 'base description' (such as 'all establishments' or 'all who currently have or offer formal Apprenticeships') displayed on the top left of the data tables which describes what base the data presented relates to (i.e. who the question was asked to).

## Structure of the main data tables

On particular tables it has been useful to combine responses to a particular question in order to create **summary codes**. You can spot these summary codes as they are presented at the bottom of a list and are in BLOCK CAPITALS (see example screenshot overleaf).

C10Civ: Preparedness for work of university or higher education leavers recruited to first job from University				
Base: All establishments who have recruited university or higher education leavers in last 2-3 years				
	Total	England East Midlands	England East of England	England London
Significance Level: 95%		a	b	c
Unweighted base	2305	217	313	533
Weighted base	213782	13013	20354	63181
Very well prepared	45280	3575	3905	11470
	21%	27%	19%	18%
		bc		
Well prepared	127605	7583	12699	38929
	60%	58%	62%	62%
Poorly prepared	27689	935	2961	8552
	13%	7%	15%	14%
Very poorly prepared	3320	83	417	1293
	2%	1%	2%	2%
			a	a
Don't know	4425	540	143	1208
	2%	4%	1%	2%
		be		
Varies too much to say	5463	297	229	1729
	3%	2%	1%	3%
				i
<b>VERY WELL/WELL PREPARED</b>	172886	11158	16604	50399
	81%	86%	82%	80%
		g		
<b>POORLY/VERY POORLY PREPARED</b>	31009	1018	3378	9845
	15%	8%	17%	16%
			adh	ad

## Percentage and raw figures

The data tables show both a raw figure and a percentage figure. This allows us to report the approximate number of establishments in a particular region that have, for example, recruited anyone aged 50+ over the past 12 months as well as allowing us to report this as a percentage of all establishments in a particular region that have recruited anyone in this age group.

UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey (UKCEPS) 2014 - England				
Table 23/ 1				
C6E: Whether recruited anyone aged 50+ in the past 12 months				
Base: All establishments who had recruited in the past year				
	Total	England East Midlands	England East of England	England London
Significance Level: 95%		a	b	c
Unweighted base	6328	631	1010	1065
Weighted base	687798	50357	81143	133591
Yes	199515 29%	16703 33%	24725 30%	27786 21%
		cdi	c	
No	477047 69%	32629 65%	54630 67%	103416 77%
Don't know	11236 2%			
Columns Tested: a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i - a,b,c,d,e - a,b,c,d,e,f - a,b,c,d,e				
Page 23				
Research conducted by IFF Research				

Raw numbers (in this instance the number of establishments in the London region who have recruited anyone aged 50+ in the past 12 months)

Percentage figure (in this instance the 27,786 establishments who had recruited someone aged 50+ expressed as a percentage of all establishments in the London region)

## Base sizes and weighting

Another important thing to understand when using the tables is that the data has been weighted to make it representative of the population of each nation / region. As per the below screenshot, the 'unweighted row' denotes that 10,032 interviews were completed with establishments England overall, of which 1,033 were completed with employers in the East Midlands region. Survey responses from these employers have been weighted to be representative of the 'total' population of establishments with

2+ employment (1,488,170 for England and 120,461 for the East Midlands).

UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey (UKCEPS) 2014 - England				
Table 148/ 1				
<b>D22. Whether currently have any staff undertaking apprenticeships at site</b>				
Base: All establishments				
	Total	England East Midlands	England East of England	England London
Significance Level: 95%		a	b	c
Unweighted base	10032	1033	1584	1619
Weighted base	1488170	120461	169817	260283
Yes	158360	14052	19967	22059
	11%	12%	12%	8%
		cfg	cfg	
No	1326639	106288	149633	237583
	89%	88%	88%	91%
		d	d	abdehi
Don't know	3172	121	216	641
	*%	*%	*%	*%
Columns Tested: a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i - a,b,c,d,e - a,b,c,d,e,f - a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k,l - a,b,c - a,b - a,b,c - a,b - a,b,c - a,b - a,b,c - a,b - a,b,c				
Page 139				
Research conducted by IFF Research				

## Significance testing on the main UK and nation tables

Statistically significant differences (at the 95% confidence level) have been presented on the main UK and nation-level data table outputs.

For identifying significant differences on the UK and nation tables it should be noted that each cross-break (i.e. each column) has been assigned a letter. In the example screenshot below from the England nation-level tables, the East Midlands region has been assigned the letter 'a' through to the London region which has been assigned the letter 'c'. Where a letter appears below a data point, this means that the figure is significantly greater than the figure in the cross-break column denoted by the letter. For example, in the below screenshot letters 'a' and 'b' beneath the 16% figure denotes that

the proportion of employers in the London region offering placements for people at university is significantly greater than the proportion of employers in both the East Midlands and East of England regions who offer such placements (11% and 9% respectively).

UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey (UKCEPS) 2014 - England				
Table 48/ 1				
C17: If have had anyone on the following types of placements in the last 12 months				
Base: All establishments				
	Total	Government Office Region		
		England East Midlands	England East of England	England London
Significance Level: 95%		a	b	c
Unweighted base	10032	1035	1584	1619
Weighted base	1488170	120461	169817	260283
Placements for people at school	295499	24581	34579	49737
	20%	20%	20%	19%
Placements for people at FE or sixth form college	181478	14174	21003	31762
	12%	12%	12%	12%
Placements for people at university	172787	13361	16035	41518
	12%	11%	9%	16%
				ab

The letters 'a' and 'b' denote here that this 16% figure is significantly greater than the 11% and 9% figures presented for cross-breaks 'a' and 'b'.

## Using the LEP key findings data tables

In addition to the UK and nation data tables, a comprehensive set of data tables is available which provides a summary of key findings for each LEP. As an example, using these tables allows us to see that 21% of employers in the Greater Manchester LEP offered Apprenticeships compared with the England average of 15%.

This sub-section of the guide will provide an overview of what data is included in these data tables and an explanation on how to read data from the tables (including how statistically significant differences are presented). It should be noted that the information covered on page 10 relating to 'percentage and raw figures' and 'base sizes and weighted' also apply to the LEP data tables.

### Overview of the data available

Key findings from EPS are presented in the summary data tables for each LEP, including the key questions related to recruitment, work experience, people development, Apprenticeships, and collaboration with other employers.

### How to use the tables

The data tables come in Microsoft Excel format with separate worksheets used to present the key findings for each LEP.

The 'total' column on the tables presents the overall findings for the particular LEP. In the example screenshot below, we can see that 31% of all establishments in the Cumbria LEP had had anyone in on work experience in the last 12 months, which compares to 38% of all employers in England.



Summary –Leeds City Region		
Base: All establishments		
		LEP
	England Total	Leeds City Region
Unweighted row	10032	389
Total	1488170	74506
<b>Apprenticeships</b>		
D24: Offer formal apprenticeships	226452	14313
	15%	*19%
D34-ALL: Whether plan to offer Apprenticeships in the future	513985	28052
	35%	38%
<b>Collaboration</b>		
D36: Collaborated with another employer in the last 12 months	257469	14300
	17%	19%

Research conducted by IFF Research

The asterisk denotes that the proportion of employers in Leeds City Region LEP offering formal Apprenticeships (19%) is significantly different to the overall proportion of employers in England offering Apprenticeships (15%)

## Notes on the importance of base sizes and statistical significance

For all surveys there is an element of sampling error which affects the statistical confidence one can have in the results presented. A key factor which influences sampling error is the base size and, given the large scale nature of EPS, the sampling errors at the overall level and at the sub-group level are typically low (i.e. users can typically have confidence in the statistical robustness of the results).

Sampling errors for the survey results overall and for a selection of sub-groups are presented in the table on the following page. Figures have been based on a survey result of 50 per cent (the ‘worst’ case in terms of statistical reliability), and have used a 95 per cent confidence level. Where the table indicates that a survey result based on all respondents has a sampling error of  $\pm 0.7$  per cent, this should be interpreted as follows: ‘for a question asked of all respondents where the survey result is 50 per cent, we are 95 per



cent confident that the true figure lies within the range 49.3 per cent to 50.7 per cent’.

*Sampling error by country and region (at the 95% confidence level) associated with a ‘worst case’ survey finding of 50%*

	Population	Number of interviews	Sampling error
UK	1,766,837	18,059	±0.7
<b>By country</b>			
England	1,488,170	10,032	±1.0
Northern Ireland	54,518	2,005	±2.2
Scotland	142,947	4,015	±1.5
Wales	81,202	2,007	±2.2
<b>By region (England)</b>			
East Midlands	120,461	1,033	±3.0
East of England	169,817	1,584	±2.5
London	260,283	1,619	±2.4
North East	55,916	545	±4.2
North West	178,229	1,069	±3.0
South East	257,798	1,593	±2.5
South West	167,484	1,071	±3.0
West Midlands	144,557	818	±3.4
Yorkshire and The Humber	133,625	700	±3.7
<b>By LEP</b>			
London	260,283	1,606	±2.44
South East	109,573	835	±3.38
New Anglia	47,115	496	±4.38
Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	51,639	424	±4.74
Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough	42,447	419	±4.76
North Eastern	42,604	416	±4.78
Leeds City Region	74,506	389	±4.96

Heart of the South West	54,888	379	±5.02
Enterprise M3	54,136	356	±5.18
South East Midlands	48,841	356	±5.18
Greater Manchester	64,055	336	±5.33
Solent	42,298	326	±5.41
Coast to Capital	55,627	321	±5.45
Hertfordshire	34,539	280	±5.83
Sheffield City Region	40,595	269	±5.96
Lancashire	37,763	264	±6.01
Greater Birmingham and Solihull	46,800	257	±6.10
Greater Lincolnshire	29,003	249	±6.18
Leicester and Leicestershire	26,588	222	±6.55
York and North Yorkshire	39,295	188	±7.13
Liverpool City Region	30,158	177	±7.34
Northamptonshire	19,904	175	±7.38
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire	28,112	172	±7.45
West of England	30,637	165	±7.61
Cheshire and Warrington	27,906	159	±7.75
Thames Valley Berkshire	26,815	153	±7.90
Dorset	23,271	149	±8.00
The Marches	22,758	143	±8.17
Coventry and Warwickshire	23,565	140	±8.26
Gloucestershire	19,818	135	±8.41
Swindon and Wiltshire	20,216	135	±8.41
Cumbria	18,347	133	±8.47
Oxfordshire LEP	21,352	130	±8.57
Tees Valley	13,312	129	±8.59
Humber	23,612	129	±8.60
Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	18,654	107	±9.45
Black Country	24,519	104	±9.59

Buckinghamshire	17,993	103	±9.63
Thames Valley			
Worcestershire	17,057	103	±9.63

### Data suppression due to low base sizes

With the importance of base sizes in mind, wherever a base size is particularly low (base of fewer than 25 employers) the data has been suppressed on the data tables with a double asterisk (\*\*) due to the lack of statistical confidence one can have in results from such a low base size (see the example below). Given the large scale nature of EPS, the need for such data suppression is infrequent.

	UK Nation			
	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
	a	*b	c	*d
Unweighted base	102	17	36	24
Weighted base	14119	394	1479	923
	4421	**	478	**
	31%	**	32%	**



[employersurveys@ukces.org.uk](mailto:employersurveys@ukces.org.uk)



[@UKCES](https://twitter.com/UKCES)



IFF Research



UK COMMISSION FOR  
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS